

House Republican Press Release

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Legislature Approves Bill To Address Hospital Infections Cosponsored By Rep. Harkins



On Wednesday, May 3, The House of Representatives gave final legislative approval to legislation cosponsored by State Rep. John Harkins, R-Stratford, designed to help reduce infections acquired in hospitals. Senate Bill 160, An Act Concerning Hospital Acquired Infections, now goes to Governor M. Jodi Rell for final approval.

Currently, the state only requires hospitals to report hospital acquired infections that result in death or serious injury. HB 5694 would create an 11-member committee to develop, operate, and monitor a mandatory reporting system for all healthcare associated infections. It requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to implement the reporting system.

Under the legislation, DPH must report to the Legislature's Public Health Committee on the plan for implementing the mandatory reporting system and its status by October 2007. By October 2008 and annually afterwards, DPH must report to the Public Health Committee on the information collected by through the reporting system.

In addition, the report must be posted on DPH's website and be available to the public.

"A constituent in my district brought this issue to my attention, requesting that hospitals do more to ensure a cleaner, safer environment," said Rep. Harkins. "These infections can lead to very serious medical problems. Because this legislation establishes a detailed reporting system, it marks an excellent step toward reducing such infections."

The committee that will determine the reporting system would include the DPH commissioner or his designee and the following 10 members appointed by him: two representing the Connecticut Hospital Association; two from organizations representing health care consumers; two who are either hospital-based infection disease specialists or epidemiologists with demonstrated knowledge and competence in infection disease issues, one representative of the Connecticut State Medical Society, one representative of a labor organization representing hospital based nurses, and two public members.